

# TEXAS COMMISSION ON JAIL STANDARDS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
Brandon S. Wood



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February 20, 2024

The Honorable Lina Hidalgo  
Harris County Judge  
1001 Preston, Ste. 911  
Houston, TX 77002-1817

and

Sheriff Ed Gonzalez  
Harris County Sheriff  
1200 Baker Street  
Houston, TX 77002

Dear Judge Hidalgo and Sheriff Gonzalez,

Pursuant to the provisions of V.T.C.A. Government Code, Section 511.011 and Title 37, Texas Administrative Code (Chapter 297, Section 5, Texas Minimum Jail Standards), you are hereby notified that the jail in your county fails to comply with minimum standards established under V.T.C.A. Local Government Code, Chapter 351, and the rules of this Commission, and that appropriate corrective measures must be initiated. A reasonable completion date for corrective measures should be set. Failure to initiate appropriate corrective action may cause a remedial order to be issued and enforced, or other appropriate action taken. **In accordance with Chapter 297, Section 6, Texas Minimum Jail Standards, please notify this agency in writing within thirty (30) days of receipt of this notice as to actions initiated.**

The attached page(s) indicate minimum standards violated, corrective measures required, and date by which corrective measures must be initiated. Please reference the Inspection Requirements Review and Jail Inspection Report issued on February 12-16, 2024 detailing the specific issues that resulted in the issuance of this notice of non-compliance.

Issued this 20th day of February 2024  
Texas Commission on Jail Standards

By Brandon S. Wood  
Brandon S. Wood, Executive Director



BW/SR

Judge Bill Stoudt, Longview, Chair  
Dr. Esmail Porsa, M.D., Parker, Vice-Chair  
Ross Reyes, Melissa

Sheriff Kelly Rowe, Lubbock  
Sheriff Raul "Pinky" Gonzales, Refugio  
Patricia M. Anthony, Garland

Commissioner Ben Perry, Waco  
Duane Lock, Southlake  
Monica McBride, Alpine

"The Commission on Jail Standards welcomes all suggestions and will promptly respond to all complaints directed against the agency or any facilities under its purview".  
To empower local government to provide safe, secure and suitable local jail facilities through proper rules and procedures while promoting innovative programs and ideas

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## NOTICE OF NON-COMPLIANCE HARRIS COUNTY JAIL

February 20, 2024

Please reference the Inspection Requirements Review and Jail Inspection Report issued on February 12-16, 2024, detailing the specific issues that resulted in the issuance of this notice of non-compliance.

Minimum Standards Violated:	Corrective Measure Required	Date Corrective Action Must Be Completed
273.7(7)	Provide procedures for the distribution of prescriptions in accordance with written instructions from a physician by an appropriate person designated by the sheriff/operator; Records reviewed failed to show that inmates housed at the <b>1307 Baker St Facility are provided medication in accordance with written instructions from a physician.</b>	<b>Upon receipt of this notice.</b>
275.(1)	Every facility shall have the appropriate number of jailers at the facility 24 hours each day. Facilities shall have an established procedure for documented face-to-face observation of all inmates by jailers no less than once every 60 minutes. Observation shall be performed at least every 30 minutes in areas where inmates known to be assaultive, potentially suicidal, mentally ill, or who have demonstrated bizarre behavior are confined. <b>60-minute observations of inmates were exceeded by staff in January approximately 1400 times by 2 minutes to 115 minutes. Additionally, observation records for areas where inmates known to be assaultive, potentially suicidal, mentally ill, or who have demonstrated bizarre behavior are confined exceeded the 30-minute observation by 2 minutes to 195 minutes. This deficiency is continued from the August 28, 2023, inspection.</b>	<b>Upon receipt of this notice.</b>

Judge Bill Stoudt, Longview, Chair  
Dr. Esmail Porsa, M.D., Parker, Vice-Chair  
Ross Reyes, Melissa

Sheriff Kelly Rowe, Lubbock  
Sheriff Raul "Pinky" Gonzales, Refugio  
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275.(4)

Inmates shall be supervised by an adequate number of jailers to comply with state law and this chapter. One jailer shall be provided on each floor of the facility where 10 or more inmates are housed, with no less than 1 jailer per 48 inmates or increment thereof on each floor for direct inmate supervision.

**On more than one occasion, Harris County failed to meet the 1:48 as required by standards. This deficiency is continued from the August 28, 2023, inspection.**

**Upon receipt of this notice.**



## Texas Commission on Jail Standards

Harris County Jail

Houston, Texas

February 12-16, 2024

Date(s) of Inspection

SUBJECT: COMPREHENSIVE INSPECTION REPORT

State Law requires periodic inspections of county jail facilities (VTCA, Local Government Code, Chapter 351, VTCA, Government Code, Chapter 511; Chapter 297.8, Texas Commission on Jail Standards).

- ☒ The facility was inspected on the date(s) indicated above, and it was determined that deficiencies exist. You are urged: (1) to give these areas of noncompliance your serious and immediate consideration; and (2) to promptly initiate and complete appropriate corrective measures. The Commission is available to discuss or assist you with the appropriate corrective measures required.

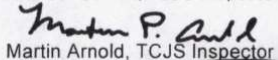
Failure to initiate and complete corrective measures following receipt of the Notice of Noncompliance may result in the issuance of a Remedial Order (Chapter 297.8, et seq.).


- ☐ This facility was inspected on the date(s) indicated above. There were no deficiencies noted and upon review of this report by the Executive Director of the Texas Commission on Jail Standards, a certificate of Compliance may be issued per the requirements of VTCA, Chapter 511 and Texas Minimum Jail Standards.


Authenticated:

Inter-Office Use Only

  
Michael Garrett, TCJS Inspector

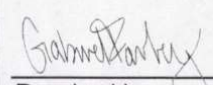
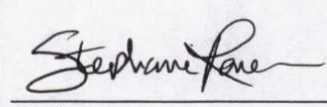
  
Martin Arnold, TCJS Inspector

  
Michael Gravitt, TCJS Inspector

  
Jason Jouett, TCJS Inspector

  
Ricky Armstrong, TCJS Asst. Director

cc: Judge  
Sheriff

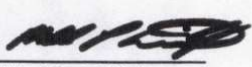
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	2/20/2024
Reviewed by:	Date

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By Gabriel Farley at 8:23 am, Feb 20, 2024

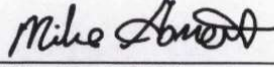
Individuals and/or entities regulated by the Texas Commission on Jail Standards shall direct all complaints regarding the commission procedures and functions to the Executive Director at: P.O. Box 12985 Austin, Texas 78711 (512) 463-5505 Fax (512) 463-3185 or at our agency website at [www.tcjs.state.tx.us](http://www.tcjs.state.tx.us).




# TEXAS COMMISSION ON JAIL STANDARDS - INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS REVIEW



Michael Gravitt, TCJS Inspector



Michael Garrett, TCJS Inspector



Jason Jouett, TCJS Inspector

Facility Harris County Jail

Date:

February 12-16, 2024

Chapter	Title	Comments
259	New Construction	Interviewed staff. Reviewed policy. Conducted a walk-through inspection of the system.
261	Existing	Not applicable.
263	Life Safety	Inspected life safety equipment and conducted and observed emergency drill. Reviewed documentation. Conducted staff interviews.
265	Admission	Not applicable.
267	Release	Reviewed a random sample of inmate files. Interviewed staff.
269	Records/Procedure	Reviewed policy and documentation. Interviewed staff and reviewed ADA compliance evaluation.
271	Classification	Reviewed staff training records. Reviewed internal classification audits. Reviewed policy. Interviewed staff. The inspection team reviewed 40 files.
273	Health Services	Reviewed 40 inmate medical files. Reviewed operational plans. (1.) <u>Deficiency noted, see report. Technical assistance provided</u> – During the investigation of an inmate complaint received while on site, it was learned that out of 173 inmates going to Court in the last 30 days, 32 inmates housed at 1307 Baker St Facility did not receive prescribed medications. Medical medication administration records reviewed, reveal that inmates who are taken to court are counted as no-shows during medication call in the mornings. <u>Follow-up action required</u> – Within the next 30 days, administration will develop a plan of action outlining procedures to be followed that ensures inmates are being provided medications before being taken to court. The administration will provide a weekly list of inmates' prescribed a.m. medications, a weekly court docket, and medication administration records for inmates taken to court at the 1307 Baker St Facility. All required documents will be provided to Lead Inspector Garrett for 30 to 45 days.
275	Supervision	Reviewed officer documentation. Interviewed staff. The inspection team reviewed 74 supervisor licenses and 168 Jailers licenses, for a total of licenses reviewed being 242. <u>Deficiencies Continues Technical Assistance Provided:</u> (1.) 60-minute observations of inmates were exceeded by staff in January approximately 1400 times by 2 minutes to 115 minutes. Additionally, observation records for areas where inmates known to be assaultive, potentially suicidal, mentally ill, or who have demonstrated bizarre behavior are confined exceeded the 30-minute observation by 2 minutes to 195 minutes. The previous deficiency continues. (2.) After reviewing staffing rosters, inspectors determined that staffing did not meet the minimum requirement of 1 officer to every 48 inmates at 710 San Jacinto and 1200 Baker. The previous deficiency continues. <u>Follow up Required:</u> Harris County will continue to send Inspector staffing records for all inmate housing facilities weekly.
277	Personal Hygiene	Conducted a facility walk through. Reviewed facility schedule.
279	Sanitation	Conducted a facility walk through. Interviewed staff and inmates. Reviewed policy.
281	Food Service	Conducted walk through inspection in kitchen area. Interviewed staff. Reviewed documentation.
283	Discipline	Reviewed 50 inmate disciplinary reports. Reviewed policy. They interviewed staff and inmates.
283	Discipline Cont	While reviewing disciplinary reports the inspection team reviewed a disciplinary appeal that was on file. Inspection team reviewed 40 files.
283.3	Grievances.	Reviewed 40 files. Interviewed staff and inmates. Reviewed policy.
285	Exercise	Walk through of exercise area conducted. Reviewed documentation. Interviewed staff and inmates.
287	Education/Library	Reviewed policy and schedule. Interviewed staff and inmates.
289	Work Assignments	Reviewed policy and schedule. Interviewed staff and inmates.
291.2	Telephone	Reviewed policy and schedule. Interviewed staff and inmates.

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By Gabriel Farley at 8:24 am, Feb 20, 2024

# TEXAS COMMISSION ON JAIL STANDARDS - INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS REVIEW

291.3	Correspondence	Reviewed policy and schedule. Interviewed staff and inmates...
291.4	Commissary	Reviewed policy and schedule. Interviewed staff and inmates..
291.5	Visitation	Reviewed policy and schedule. Interviewed staff and inmates..
xxx	Religious Practices	Reviewed policy and schedule. Interviewed staff and inmates..
xxx	Variances	Reviewed facility variances. .
xxx	Remedial Orders	Not applicable.
	Complaints	Interviewed staff and inmates. Reviewed complaints regarding temperature of the facility, found the facilities to be in compliance with minimum standards.

*Ricky Armstrong*  
 Ricky Armstrong, TCJS, Asst. Director

*Martin P. Arnold*  
 Martin Arnold, TCJS inspector

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 By Gabriel Farley at 8:24 am, Feb 20, 2024



Facility Name: Harris Co. Jail

Date: February 12-16, 2024

Item	Section	Paragraph	Comments
1	273.7	(7)	<p>Provide procedures for the distribution of prescriptions in accordance with written instructions from a physician by an appropriate person designated by the sheriff/operator;</p> <p><b>Records reviewed failed to show that inmates housed at the 1307 Baker St Facility are provided medication in accordance with written instructions from a physician.</b></p>
2	275	(1)	<p>Every facility shall have the appropriate number of jailers at the facility 24 hours each day. Facilities shall have an established procedure for documented, face-to-face observation of all inmates by jailers no less than once every 60 minutes. Observation shall be performed at least every 30 minutes in areas where inmates known to be assaultive, potentially suicidal, mentally ill, or who have demonstrated bizarre behavior are confined. <b>60-minute observations of inmates were exceeded by staff on a routine basis by 1 minute to 1 hour 55 minutes.</b></p>
3	275	(4)	<p>Inmates shall be supervised by an adequate number of jailers to comply with state law and this chapter. One jailer shall be provided on each floor of the facility where 10 or more inmates are housed, with no less than 1 jailer per 48 inmates or increment thereof on each floor for direct inmate supervision. <b>On more than one occasion, Harris County failed to meet the 1:48 as required by standards.</b></p>

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Technical Assistance

Facility Name: Harris Co. Jail

Date: February 12-16, 2024

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